

justice.—None of their speculations seem to acknowledge the gloomy fact which the New Testament so often asserts or implies, that all men are "by nature children of wrath."

It is quite of course that among sentiments of this order, the idea of the redemption by Jesus Christ (if any allusion to it should occur,) can but appear with equivocal import, and "shorn of the beams" which constitute the peculiar light of his own revelation. While man is not considered as lost, the mind cannot do justice to the expedient, or to "the only name under heaven," by which he can be redeemed.\* Accordingly the gift of Jesus Christ does not appear to be habitually recollected as the most illustrious instance of the beneficence of God that has come within human knowledge, and as the fact which has contributed more than all others to relieve the oppressive awfulness of the mystery in which our world is enveloped. No thankful joy seems to awake at the thought of so mighty an interposition, and of him whose sublime appointment it was to undertake and accomplish it. When it is difficult to avoid making some allusion to him, he is acknowledged rather in any of his subordinate characters, than as absolutely a Redeemer; or if the term Redeemer, or, our Saviour, is introduced, it is done as with a certain inaptitude to pronounce a foreign appellation; as with a somewhat irksome feeling at falling in momentary contact with language so specifically of the Christian school. And it is done in a manner which betrays, that the author does not mean all that he feels some dubious intimation that such a term should mean. Jesus Christ is regarded rather as having added to our moral advantages, than as having conferred that without which all the rest were in vain; rather as having made the passage to a happy futurity somewhat, more commodious, than as having formed the passage itself over what was else an impassable gulf. Thus that comprehensive sum of blessings, called in the New Testament Salvation, or Redemption, is shrunk into a comparatively inconsiderable favour, which a less glorious messenger might have brought, which a less magnificent language than that dictated by inspiration might have described, and which a less costly sacrifice might have secured.

It is consistent with this delusive idea of human nature,

\* Acts iv. 12.